



THE HON. CHRISTIAN PORTER MP
Attorney-General

THE HON. DAVID LITTLEPROUD
Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources

Joint Media Release

Friday, 5th April 2019

Protecting Australian farmers' privacy

The Coalition Government will bring the Aussie Farms website under the Privacy Act, exposing it to potential penalties of more than \$400,000 if it breaches the Act.

Attorney-General, Christian Porter, said the activities of Aussie Farms Incorporated created an unacceptable risk to hardworking farming communities and producers.

“The company publishes information about Australian farmers and agricultural producers including their names and addresses, exposing them to potential trespass, biosecurity hazards, and reputational damage,” the Attorney-General said.

“Listing this activist group as an organisation under the Privacy Act, now means that the company will have to abide by the provisions of the Act.”

Minister for Agriculture, David Littleproud, said he had repeatedly asked Aussie Farms to take the website down before someone was hurt or worse, but the group behind the website flat refused.

“The farming families who grow our food deserve to be able to do so without fear of invasion on their property and harm to their children,” Minister Littleproud said.

“The Aussie Farms website is intended to be an attack map for activists and it is already working as one. The fact Aussie Farms refused to take the website down when invasions began happening on farms displayed on their map shows they intend for it to be used as an attack map for activists.

“Aussie Farms will now be required to comply with the Privacy Act, which includes laws against the misuse of personal information. I note the maximum penalty for an offence under the Privacy Act is \$420,000.”

Minister Littleproud also called on state governments to beef up trespass laws to provide real penalties for trespass, and to make publicly state that they expect the police will uphold these laws.

Background:

- **The Australian Information and Privacy Commissioner previously found that Aussie Farms Incorporated was exempt from the Privacy Act because its annual turnover was less than \$3 million.**
- **This move means Aussie Farms Incorporated is prescribed as an 'organisation' under the Privacy Act, which requires Aussie Farms to act in accordance with the Privacy Act, regardless of its annual turnover**
- **Prescribing Aussie Farms Incorporated allows the Information and Privacy Commissioner to investigate, either in response to a complaint or on her own initiative, if Aussie Farms Incorporated breaches the Privacy Act. The prescription comes into force as of tomorrow (Saturday, 6th April)**